

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

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House Passes Historic 9/11 Legislation

Reorganization Authority for Intelligence Agencies, Improved Security Clearance Process, Stronger ID Standards Are Among Davis' Proposals

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA-11th) is pleased to announce that the U.S. House of Representatives today approved H.R. 10, the “9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act,” by a vote of ###-###. The act addresses the problems and weaknesses identified by the bipartisan National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9/11 Commission) by revamping the federal government’s intelligence network and improving national security.

Chairman Davis (R-VA) is an original co-sponsor of H.R. 10, which was introduced by House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) on September 24, 2004. Several key provisions of the bill were approved by the Government Reform Committee last week by voice vote.

The legislation creates a new National Intelligence Director (with budget authority), a National Counterterrorism Center, and a Joint Intelligence Community Council, and makes other comprehensive reforms to the organization of the Intelligence Community. The bill is not only consistent with the findings and recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, but also reflects the recent oversight work of the Government Reform Committee and both houses of Congress.

“We took our time to craft a bill that takes steps to improve the security of our nation, and at all times remains true to the 9/11 Commission report. I am proud of what we’ve achieved in this legislation, on behalf of the American people who, understandably, are clamoring for change,” Davis said.

“While the creation of a National Intelligence Director and a National Counterterrorism Center will go a long way toward improving our intelligence-gathering

and intelligence-sharing capabilities, I would like to elaborate on a few of the provisions of the larger bill that fall within our jurisdiction at Government Reform, and why I believe they are crucial to this effort,” Davis added.

- **Executive Reorganization Authority for intelligence agencies.** “H.R. 10 would give the President the power to submit reorganization plans – limited to the intelligence community – to Congress for a guaranteed, up-or-down vote. We can’t afford to assume this legislation is a panacea that will somehow be the last word on intelligence reform. The President should have the ability to make further tweaks to the organization without having to worry about his proposal getting watered down or just plain blocked in Congress. Congress, of course, retains the ultimate say.”
- **A streamlined financial disclosure for those nominated to positions within the intelligence community.** “Just about anyone who studies the presidential appointments proves realizes that it is broken – it takes too long to confirm individuals to key positions, and the process itself often drives away some of the best qualified to serve,” stated Chairman Davis. “Financial disclosure requirements are supposed to protect against conflict of interest concerns. But they have become proxy statements for a nominee’s net worth, with more detail than necessary. This legislation would return to the original intent of financial disclosures.”
- **An improved security clearance process.** “The legislation would assign security clearance management and oversight to the Office of the National Intelligence Director. The NID would set uniform standards and policies and require reciprocity among agencies. This would enable an individual with a top-secret clearance at, say, Treasury to retain that clearance should he or she move to another agency. Previous efforts to enforce reciprocity have failed, but this legislation would finally address this important part of the process by putting an end to the time – and money – wasting practice of redundant security clearance investigations and adjudications. This redundancy drives up the cost of doing business, and this cost is ultimately passed on to the taxpayers.”
- **New federal standards for identification cards and birth certificates.** “We need to have confidence that when someone shows a state driver’s license to board a plane, or shows a state birth certificate to get a passport, that the ID is valid. Is this a national ID card? No. We’re simply saying the federal government must have documents it can trust, and it is perfectly within its right to establish minimum standards for federal acceptance. This important provision would provide grant money to help states meet the new federal guidelines and give them three years to comply. Though states have made strides in improving the security of driver licenses and identification cards, the 9/11 Commission outlines the need to establish minimum standards as a framework for improvement.”

“This language was crafted with the assistance of the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and the National Association for Public Health and Information Systems (NAPHIS), who administer these programs for the States. They have been hard at work developing studies, best practices and guidelines on this issue, especially since the terrorist attacks on our nation, and this legislation closely follows these recommendations for action. Importantly, this provision is also strongly supported by the 9/11 victims’ families.”

- **A revitalized FBI workforce.** “H.R. 10 provides for retention bonuses and critical pay authorities to help the FBI improve its intelligence directorate. It also allows for delays in mandatory retirements and the creation of a Reserve Service so the agency can re-activate retired employees with specialized skills.”
- **Enhanced Information Sharing.** “The legislation would task the President with establishing a trusted and secure ‘information-sharing environment’ to promote the sharing of intelligence information, and to change the culture in the federal government from ‘need to know’ to ‘need to share.’ This initiative is the result of the collaborative efforts of multiple committees of jurisdiction. The rationale for this language is straightforward: as a nation, we must be able to identify terrorist threats and defeat them. Our success depends on collecting, analyzing, and appropriately sharing information found in databases, transactions, and other sources,” Chairman Davis said.

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